

T H E  
Earle of Gowries  
Conspiracie against the  
Kings Maiestie.

*At Saint Iohnstoun vpon Tuesday*  
the fift day of August : And in the  
sixteene hundred yeere of  
*our Lord God.*



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white Swanne.

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A Discourse, of the vnnaturall and  
*vile conspiracie, attempted against his*  
Maiesties person at Saint Iohnstoun, vpon  
*the fift day of August being Tuesday.*  
1600.



Is Maiestie hauing his residence at *Falkland*, and being dayly at the Bucke-hunting (as his vse is in that season) vpon the fift day of *August*, being Tuesday, he raide out to the Parke, betweene fixe and seauen of the clocke in the morning, the weather being wonderfull pleasant and seasonable. But before his Maiesty could leape on

horse backe, his Highnesse being now come downe by the Equerie: all the huntsmen with the hownds attending his Maiestie on the greene, and the Court making to their horses, as his Highnesse selfe was: Master *Alexander Ruthwen*, second brother to the late Earle of *Gowrie*, being then lighted in the towne of *Falkland*, hasted him fast downe to ouertake his Maiestie before his on-leaping, as he did. Where meeting his Highnesse, after a very lowe curtesie, bowing his head vnder his Maiesties knee, (although he was neuer wont to make so lowe curtesie) drawing his Maiestie aparte, hee beginnes to discourse vnto him (but with a very dejected countenance, his



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eyes euer fixed vpon the earth) how that it chaunced him in the euening before, to be walking abroad about the fields, taking the aire solitary alone, without the Towne of Saint *Iohnstoun*, where his present dwelling with the Lord his brother was, and there, by accident, affirmed to haue recounted a base-like fellow, vnknowne to him, with a cloke cast about his mouth: whome as he enquired his name, and what his errand was to be passing in so solitarie a parte, beeing from all wayes: the fellow became on a sodaine so amazed, and his tongue so faultred in his mouth, that vppon his suspicious behauour he begunne more narrowly to looke vnto him and examine him: and perceiuing that there appeared some thing to be hidde vnder his cloke, he did cast by the lappes of it, and so findes a great wide pot to be vnder his arme, all full of coyned Golde in great peeces, assuring his Maiestie that it was in very great quantity. Vpon the sight wherof (as he affirmed) hee tooke backe the fellow with the burthen to the Towne, where he priuately, without the knowledge of any man, took the fellow, and bound him in a priuie derved house: and after locked many doores vppon him, and left him there and his pot with him, and had hasted himselfe out of saint *Iohnstoun* that day by foure houres in the morning, to make his Maiestie aduertised thereof, according to his bound dutie: earnestly requesting his Maiestie with all diligence and secrecie, that his Maiestie might take order therewith, before any know thereof: swearing and protesting, that he had yet concealed it from all men: yea, from the Earle his owne brother. His Maiesties first answere was (after thanking him for his good will) that it could not become his Maiestie to meddle any wayes in that matter, since no mans treasure that is a free and lawefull subiect, can by the lawe, appertaine vnto the King, except it be found hidde vnder the earth, as this was not. Whereunto he answered, that the fellow confessed vnto him that hee was going to haue hidde it vnder the ground, but  
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could not take leasure at that time to enquire any further of him. Whereunto his Maiestie replied, that there was great difference betwixt a deede, and the intention of a deede: his intention to haue hidde it, not being alike as if it had beene found already hidde. Maister *Alexanders* answere was, that hee thought his Maiestie ouer scrupulous in such a matter, tending so greatly to his Maiesties profite: and that if his Maiestie deferred to meddle with it, that it might be, that the Lord his brother, and other great men might meddle with it, and make his Maiestie the more adoe. Whereupon the King beginning to suspect that it had beene some forraine gold brought home by some Iesuites for practising Papistes (therewith to stirre vp some newe sedition, as they haue oftentimes done before) inquired of the said master *Alexander*, what kinde of coyne it was, and what a fellowe he was that carried it. His answere was, that so farre as hee could take leasure to see of them, that they seemed to be forraine strokes of coyne, and although the fellow, both by his language and fashions seemed to be a Scots fellow, yet he could neuer remember that he had scene him before. These speaches increased his Maiesties suspition, that it was forraine coyne brought in by some practising Papistes, and to be distributed into the Countrey, as is before saide: And that the fellowe that carried it, was some Scots Priest, or Seminarie so disguised, for the more sure transporting thereof.

Whereupon his Maiesty resolved that he would send backe with the saide maister *Alexander*, a seruant of his owne, with a warrant to the Prouost and Bailiffes of Saint *Iohnstoun*, to receiue both the fellow and the money at maister *Alexanders* hand, and after they had examined the fellow, to retaine him and the treasure, till his Maiesties further pleasure was knowne.

Whereat the saide maister *Alexander* stirred maruelously: affirming and protesting, that if either the Lord his bro-

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ther, or the Bailiffes of the Towne were put on the counsaile thereof: his Maiestie would gette a very badde count made to him of that treasure, swearing that the great loue and affection hee bare vnto his Maiestie, had made him to preferre his Maiestie in this case, both vnto himselfe and his brother. For the which seruice hee humbly craued that recompence, that his Maiesty would take the paines once to ride thither, that hee might be the first seer thereof himselfe: which being done, hee would remitte to his Maiesties owne honourable discretion, how farre it would please his Maiestie to consider vpon him for that seruice.

His Highnesse being stricken in great admiration, both of the vncouthnesse of the tale, and of the strange and stupide behauiour of the Reporter: and the Court being already horsed, wondring at his Maiesties so long stay with that Gentleman, the morning being so faire, the game already found, and the huntsmen so long staying in the fields on his Maiestie: hee was forced to breake off, onely with these words, that hee could not now stay any longer from his sporte, but that hee would consider of the matter, and at the end of his chase, giue him a resolute answer, what order hee would take therein. Whereuppon his Maiestie parted in haste from him towards the place where the game was.

Maister *Alexander* parting from his Maiestie very discontent, that indelayedly hee raide not to saint *Johnstoun* as hee desired him: protesting that his Maiestie would not finde euery day such a choise of hunting, as hee had offered to him, and that hee feared that his Maiesties long delay and slownesse of resolution, would breede leasure to the fellow, who was lying bound, to cry, or make such dinne, as would disappoynt the secrecie of that whole purpose, and make both the fellowe and the treasure to be meddled with, before any word could come from his Maiestie: as also, that his brother would misse him, in respect of his absence that morning, which

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if his Maieſty had pleaſed to haſte, hee might haue preuented: arriuing there in the time of his brothers & the whole townes being at the ſermon : whereby his Maieſtie might haue taken ſuch ſecret order with that matter, as hee pleaſed, before their out-comming from the Church. But his Maieſtie, without any further anſwering him, leaping on horſe backe, and riding to the dogges, where they were beginning to hunt, the ſaide maſter *Alexander* ſtayed ſtill in that place where hee left his Maieſtie : and hauing two men with him, appointed by the Earle his brother, to carry backe vnto him the certayne newes in all haſte, of his Maieſties comming (as heereafter more particularly ſhall in this ſame diſcourſe be declared.)

Hee directed the one of them called *Andrew Henderson*, Chamberlaine to the ſayde Earle, to ride in all haſte to the Earle, commaunding him, as hee loued his brothers honour, that hee ſhould not ſpare for ſpilling of his horſe, and that hee ſhould aduertife the Earle, that hee hoped to mooue his Maieſtie to come thither, and that hee ſhould not yet looke for him, the ſpace of three houres thereafter, becauſe of his Maieſties hunting, adding theſe wordes : Pray my Lord my brother to prepare the dinner for vs. But his Maieſtie was no ſooner ridden vppe to a little hill aboue the little woodde, where the dogges were laide on in hunting : but that notwithstanding the pleaſant beginning of the chaſe, hee could not ſtay from muſing and wondering vppon the newes. Whereupon without making any body acquainted with this purpoſe, finding *Iohn Neſmith* Chirurgian, by chance riding beſide him, his Maieſtie directed him backe, to bring maſter *Alexander* with him : who being brought vnto his Maieſtie, and hauing newly directed, as ſaide is, one of his men that was with him backe to my Lord his brother, his maieſtie vnknowing or ſuſpecting that any man liuing had come with him, then tolde him that he had bene aduiſing with himſelfe, and in reſpect of his laſt wordes ſo earneſt with him, hee reſolued to ride thither  
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for that arrand in his owne person, how soone the chase was ended, which was already begunne. Like as his maiestie, vppon the very ending of these wordes, did ride away in the chase, the said maister *Alexander* following him at his backe: no other creature being with his Highnesse, but hee, and *Iohn Hamilton* of *Grange*, one of his Maiesties Master-stablers, the rest of the Court being all before in the chase, his Maie-  
stie onely being cast backe vpon the staying to speake with maister *Alexander*, as is before said.

The Chase lasted from about seauen of the clocke in the morning, vntill eleuen, and more, beeing one of the greatest and forest chases that euer his maiesty was at: all which time the sayde maister *Alexander* was (for the most part) euer at his Maiesties backe, as is sayd. But there neuer was any stop in the chase, or so small a delay, that the sayde maister *Alexander* omitted to round his Maiestie, earnestly requesting him to hasten the end of the hunting, that he might ride the sooner to saint *Iohn-stoun*. So as at the death of the Bucke, his Maiesty, not staying vpon the curry of the Diere, (as his vse is) scarcely tooke time to alight, awaiting vpon the comming of a fresh horse to ride on, the greatnes of the chase hauing wearied his horse.

But the said maister *Alexander* would not suffer the King to stay in the parke where the Bucke was killed, while his fresh horse, which was already sent for, was brought out of the equery to him, (althought it was not two flight shot off betwixte the parte where the Bucke was killed, and his Maiesties equery:) but with very importunity forced his maiesty to leape on agayne vpon that same horse, that he had hunted all the day vpon, his fresh horse being made to gallop a mile of the way to ouertake him: his Maiestie not staying so much as vpon his sword, nor while the Duke and the Earle of *Marre*, with diuerse other Gentlemen in his company had changed their horse: Onely saying vnto them, that hee  
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was to ride to *Saint Iohn-stoun* to speake with the earle of *Gowrie*, and that he would be presently backe againe before euen.

Wherevpon some of the Court gallopped backe to *Falkeland* as fast as they coude, to chaunge their horse, but could not ouertake his Maiestie, vntill hee came within foure miles of *Saint Iohn-stoun*. Others rode forward with their horse, wearied as they were, whereof some were compelled to alight by the way, and had they not both refreshed their horses, fed them, and giuen them some grasse by the way, they had not carried them to *S. Iohnstoun*. The cause of his Maiesties seruants folowing so fast, vndesired by him, was onely grounded vpon a suspicion they had conceiued that his Maiesties intention of riding, was for the apprehension of the master of *Olephant*, one who had late laide downe a vile and prowd oppression in *Angus*. For repairing of the which, they thoght his Maiestie had some purpose for his apprehension.

But the sayde maister *Alexander* seeing the Duke and the Earle of *Mar*, with diuerse of the court, getting fresh horse for following of his Maiestie, earnestly desired him, that he would publish to his whole traine, that since he was to returne the same euening, as is aforesaide, they needed not to folow him, especially that he thought it meetest his Maiestie should stay the duke and the earle of *Mar* to folow him, and that he should onely take three or foure of his owne seruants with him, affirming, that if any noble man followed him, he could not answer for it, but that they would marre that whole purpose. Whereupon his Maiestie halfe angry, replied, that he would not mistrust the Duke nor the earle of *Mar* in a greater purpose than that, and that hee could not vnderstand what hindrance any man could make in that errand.

But these last speeches of maister *Alexanders*, made the King beginne to suspect what it should meane: whereupon many and sundry thoughts beganne to enter into the Kings mind: yet his Maiestie could neuer suspect any harme to be



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intended against his Highnesse by that yoong Gentleman, with whom his maiestie had beene so well acquainted, as he had, not long before, been in suite to be one of the Gentlemen of his Chamber : so as, the farthest that the Kings suspition could reach to, was, that it might be but the Earle his brother had handled him so hardly, that the yong Gentleman, being of a high spirite, had taken such displeasure, as hee was become somewhat beside himselfe, which his maiestie coniectured, as well by his raised and vncouth staring, and continuall pensiveness all the time of the hunting; as likewise, by such strange sorte of vnlikely discourses, as are already mentioned.

Whereuppon the King tooke occasion to make the Duke of *Lenox* acquainted with the whole purpose, enquiring of him very earnestly what hee knew of that yong Gentlemans nature, being his brother in lawe: and if hee had perceiued him to be subiect to any high apprehension, his maiesty declaring his suspition plainly to the said Lord Duke, that hee thought him not well settled in his wittes : alwayes desiring my Lord Duke not to faile to accompany him into that house, where the alleadged fellow and treasure was.

The Lord Duke wondered much at that purpose, and thought it very vnlikely : yet he affirmed, that he could neuer perceiue any such appearance in that Gentlemans inclination. But maister *Alexander* perceiuing his maiesties priue conference with the Duke, and suspecting the purpose as it appeared, came to the King, requesting his maiestie very earnestly, hee should make none liuing acquainted with that purpose, nor suffer none to goe with his maiestie where he should conuoy him, but himself only, vntil his maiestie had once seene the fellow and the treasure: whereunto his maiestie halfe laughing, gaue answer, that he was no good teller of money, & behoued therefore to haue some to helpe him in that errand : his replye was, that hee would suffer none to see it but his maiesties self at the first, but afterwards he might call in whom he pleased.

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These speeches did so increase his suspicion, that then hee beganne directly to suspect some treasonable deuise. Yet many suspicions and thoughts ouerwhelming one euery one another in his minde, his maiestie could resolue vpon no certaine thing, but rode further on his iourney, betwixt trust and distrust, being ashamed to seem to suspect, in respect of the cleanness of his Maiesties owne conscience, except he had found some greater ground. Maister *Alexander* still preasing the King to ride faster, though his owne horse was scarcely able to keepe company with the King for wearines, hauing ridden with him all the chase before. The King being come two mile from *Falkeland*, maister *Alexander* stayed a while behinde the King in the way, and posted away the other seruant *Andrew Ruthwen* to the Earle his brother, aduertising him how farre the King was on his way to come thither. Then howe soone soeuer the King came within a mile of *Johnstoun*, hee saide to his Maiestie, that he would post in before, to aduertise the earle his brother of his Maiesties comming: who at his incomming to him, was sitting at the midst of his dinner, neuer seeming to take knowledge of the Kings comming, till his brother told it him, notwithstanding that twoo of his seruants had aduertised him thereof before. And immediately vpon his brothers report, rising in haste from the boord, and warning al the seruants and friends to accompanie him to meete his Maiestie, who met him with three or foure score men, at the end of the Inshe, his Maiesties whole traine, not exceeding the number of fifteene persons, and all without any kinde of armour, except swords, no not so much as daggers or whingears. His Maiestie stayed an houre after his comming to the saide Earles lodging in Saint *Johnstoun* before his dinner came in. The longsomnesse of preparing the same, and badnes of the cheere, being excused vpon the sodaine comming of his Maiestie vnlooked for there.

During which time, his Maiestie enquired of maister *A-*

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*Alexander*, when it was time for him to goe to that priuate house, about that matter whereof he had informed him: who answered that all was sure enough, but that there was no haste yet for an houre, till the King had dined at his leisure. Praying his Maiesty to leaue him, and not to be seene to round with him before his Brother, who hauing missed him that morning, might therevpon suspect what the matter should meane. Therefore his maiestie addressed him to the Earle, and discoursed with him vpon sundry matters, but could get no direct answer of him, but halfe words, and imperfect sentences.

His maiestie being set downe to his dinner, the saide Earle stood very pensieue, and with a dejected countenance at the end of his maiesties table, oft rounding ouer his shoulder, one while to one of his seruants, and another while to another: and oft times went out and in to the chamber. Which forme of behaviour he likewise kept before the kings sitting downe to dinner: but without any welcoming of his maiestie, or any other heartie forme of entertainment. The noblemen and gentlemen of the Court that were with his maiestie standing about the table, and not desired to dine (as the vse is when his maiesty is once set downe, and his first seruice brought vp) vntill his maiestie had almost dined. At which time the Earle conueyed them forth to their dinner, but sate not downe with them himselfe (as the common maner is) but came backe and stood silent at the end of the Kings table, as he did before: which his maiestie perceiuing, began to entertaine the Earle in a homely manner, wondring he had not remained to dine with his guests, and entertaine them there.

His Maiestie being ready to rise from the table, and all his seruants in the hall at their dinner, maister *Alexander* standing behinde his maiesties backe, pulled quietly vpon him, rounding in his maiesties eare, that it was time to goe, but that he would faine haue beene quit of the Earle his brother, wishing the King to send him out into the hall, to entertaine  
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his guests : wherevpon the King called for drinke , and in a merry and homely maner said to the Earle , that although the Earle had seene the fashion of entertainment in other countries, yet he would teach him the Scottish fashion, seeing hee was a Scottish man : and therefore since hee had forgotten to drinke to his maiestie, or sit with his guests and entertaine them, his maiestie would drinke to him his owne welcome, desiring him to take it forth and drinke to the rest of the company , and in his maiesties name to make them welcome. Whereupon as he went forth, his maiestie rose from the table, and desired maister *Alexander* to bring Sir *Thomas Erskine* with him : who desiring the King to goe forward with him, and promising that he should make any one or twoo follow him that he pleased to call for , desiring his maiestie to commaund publikely that none should follow him . Thus the King accompanied onely with the saide maister *Alexander*, comes forth of the Chamber, passeth through the end of the hall, where the Noblemen and his maiesties seruantes were sitting at their dinner , vp a turne-pecke, and through three or foure Chambers, the saide maister *Alexander* euer locking behinde him every doore as he passed : and then with a more smiling countenance than he had all the day before, euer saying, he had him sure and safe enough kept : vntill at the last , his maiesty passing through three or foure sundrie houses, and all the doores locked behinde him, his maiestie entred into a little study , where hee saw standing with a verry abased countenance, not a bondman, but a freeman, with a dagger at his girdle. But his maiestie had no sooner entred into that little study, and maister *Alexander* with him, but maister *Alexander* locked the study doore behind him, and at that instant changing his countenance, putting his harte on his head, and drawing the dagger from that other mans girdle, held the poynt of it to the Kings breast, auowing now that the King behoued to be in his will, and used as hee list:



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swearing many bloody oths, that if the King cryed one word: or opened a window to looke out, that dagger should presently goe to his heart: affirming, that he was sure, that nowe the Kings conscience was burthened for murtherring his father. His maiesty wondring at so sodaine an alteration, and standing naked, without any kinde of armour but his hunting horne, which he had not gotten leisure to lay from him, betwixt these two Traitors which had conspired his life: the saide maister *Alexander* standing (as is saide) with a dagger in his hand, and his sword at his side: but the other trembling & quaking, rather like one condemned, than an executioner of such an enterprise.

His maiestie begun then to dilate to the saide maister *Alexander*, how horrible a thing it was for him to meddle with his maiesties innocent blood, assuring him it would not be vnrequenged, since God had giuen him children and good subiects, and if they neither, yet God would raise vp stocks and stones to punish so vile a deede.

Protesting before God, that he had no burthen in his conscience for the execution of his father: both in respect that at the time of his fathers execution, his maiestie was but a *minor* of age, and guided at that time by a faction which ouer-ruled both his maiestie, and the rest of the country: as also that whatsoever was done to his Father, it was done by the ordinary course of Law and Iustice.

Appealing the saide maister *Alexander* vpon his conscience how well he at all times since had deserued at the hands of all his race, not only hauing restored them to all their lands and dignities, but also in nourishing & bringing vp of two or three of his sisters, as it were in his owne bosome, by a continuall attendance vpon his maiesties deereft bedfellow in her priue chamber.

Laying also before him, the terrors of his conscience, especially, that he made profession, according to his education, of  
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the same religion which his maiestie had euer professed : and namely, his Maiestie remembred him of that holy man, maister *Robert Rollocke*, whose scholler he was, assuring him, that one day the said maister *Roberts* soule would accuse him, that he had neuer learned of him to practise such vnnaturall cruelty. His maiestie promising to him, on the word of a prince, that if hee would spare his life, and suffer him to goe out againe, hee would neuer reueale to any flesh liuing, what was betwixt them at that time, nor neuer suffer him to incurre any harme or punishment for the same.

But his maiesties feare was, that hee could hope for no sparing at his hands: hauing such cruelty in his lookes, and standing so irreuerently couered with his hat on, which forme of rigorous behauiour, could prognosticate nothing to his Maiesty, but present extremity. But at his Maiesties perswasive language, he appeered to be somewhat amazed, and vncouering his head againe, swore and protested that his maiesties life should be safe, if he would behaue himselfe quietly, without making noyse or crying : and that he would onely bring in the earle his brother, to speake with his maiestie : wherevpon his Maiesty enquiring what the earle would doe with him, since ( if his maiesties life were safe according to promise ) they could gayne little in keeping such a prisoner. His answer only was, that he could tell his maiestie no more, but that his life should be safe, in case he behaued hymselfe quietly, the rest, the Earle his brother, whome he was going for, would tel his maiestie at his comming. With that, as he was going forth for his brother, as he affirmed, he turned him about to the other man, saying these words vnto him, I make you here the Kings keeper, till I come backe againe, and see that you keepe him, vpon your owne perill : and therewithall said to his maiestie, you must content your selfe to haue this man now your keeper, vntill my comming backe.

With these words he passeth forth, locking the doore after



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ter him, leaving his maiestie with that man he found there before him. Of whome his maiestie then enquired, if he were appoynted to be the murtherer of him at that time, and howe farre he was vpon the counsell of that conspiracie, whose answer with a trembling and astonished voyce and behauior, was, that as the Lord should iudge him, he was neuer made acquainted with that purpose, but that hee was put in there perforce, and the doore lockt vpon him, a litle space before his maiesties comming: as indeede all the time of the saide master *Alexanders* menacing his maiestie, hee was euer trembling, requesting him, for Gods sake, and with many other attestations, not to meddle with his maiesty, nor to do him any harme. But because M. *Alexander* had before his going forth, made the King sweare he should not cry, nor open any window, his maiesty commanded the said fellow to open the window on his right hand, which he readily did: so that although he was put in there to vse violence on the King, yet God so turnd his heart, as he became a slaue to his prisoner.

While his maiestie was in this dangerous estate, and none of his owne seruants nor traine knowing where hee was, and as his Maiesties traine was rising in the Hall from their dinner, the Earle of *Gowrie* being present with them, one of the Earle of *Gowries* seruants comes hastily in assuring the Earle his maister, that his Maiestie was horsed, and away through the Inshe, which the Earle reporting to the noblemen, and the rest of his Maiesties traine that was there present, they all rushed out together at the gate in great haste: and some of his Maiesties seruants enquiring of the Porter when his Maiestie went foorth? The Porter affirmed, that the King was not yet gone foorth. Wherevpon the Earle looked very angerly vpon him, and said, hee was but a liar: yet turning him to the Duke, and to the Earle of *Marre*, said he should presently get them sure word where his Maiestie was, and with that, ranne through the close, and



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and vp the staires. But his purpose in deede, was to speake with his brother, as appeered very well by the circumstance of time; his brother; hauing at that same instant leste the King in the little study, and ranne downe the staires in great haste.

Immediately after the Earle commeth backe, running againe to the gate, where the noble men and the rest, were standing in amaze, assuring them that the King was gone long since out at the backe gate, and if they hasted them not the sooner, they would not ouertake him, and with that, called for his horse, whereat they rusht all together out at the gate, and made toward the Inshe, crying all for their horses : passing all (as it was the prouidence of God) vnder one of the windowes of that study, wherein his maiestie was. To whom maister *Alexander* very speedily returned, and at his incomming to his Maiestie, casting his hands abroad in a desperate maner, saide: he could not mend it, his maiestie behooued to die: and with that, offered a garter to binde his maiesties hands, with swearing, he behooued to be bound. His maiestie at that word of binding, saide, hee was borne a free King, and should die a free King. Whereuppon he griping his maiestie by the wrest of the hand, to haue bound him, his maiestie relieved himselfe sodainely of his gripes : whereuppon, as he put his right hand to his sword, his Maiestie with his right hand seized vpon both his hand and his sword, and with his left hand, clasped him by the throate, like as he with his left hand claspt the King by the throat, with two or three of his fingers in his Maiesties mouth, to haue stayed him from crying. In this manner of wrestling his Maiestie perforce drew him to the windowe, which he had caused the other man before to open vnto him, and vnder the which was passing by, at the same time, the Kings traine, and the Earle of *Gomrie* with them, as is saide, and holding out the right side of his head and right elbowe, cried, that they were murthering him there in that treasonable forme: whose voice being instantly heard and knowne by the Duke

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of *Lennox*, the Earle of *Marre*, and the rest of his Maiesties traine there: the saide Earle of *Gowrie* euer asking what it meant? And neuer seeming any wayes to haue seene his Ma-iestie, or heard his voyce, they all rushed in at the gate together, the Duke and the Earle of *Marre* running about to come by that passage his Maiestie came in at. But the Earle of *Gowrie* and his seruants made them for another way vp a quiet Turne-pecke, which was euer condemned before, and was onely then left open, (as appeared) for that purpose.

And in this meane time, his Maiestie, with strugling and wrastring with the saide maister *Alexander*, had brought him perforce out of that study, the doore whereof, for haste, he had left open at his last in-comming, and his maiestie hauing gotten, (with long strugling) the saide maister *Alexanders* head vnder his arme, and himselfe on his knees, his Maiestie droue him backe perforce hard to the doore of the same turnepike, and as his Maiestie was throwing his sword out of his hand, thinking to haue stricken him therewith, and then to haue shot him ouer the staire, the other fellow standing behinde the Kings backe, and doing nothing but trembling all the time. Sir *Iohn Ramsay*, not knowing what way first to enter, after hee had heard the Kings crie, by chance findes that Turne-pecke dore open, and following it vp to the head, enters in into the chamber, and findes his Maiestie and maister *Alexander* strugling in that forme, as is before said: and after hee had twise or thrise stricken maister *Alexander* with his dagger, the other man withdrew himselfe, his maiestie still keeping his grapes, and holding him close to him: immediatly thereafter he tooke the said maister *Alexander* by the shoulders, and shot him downe the staire: who was no sooner shot out at the doore, but he was met by Sir *Thomas Erskine*, and Sir *Hew Hereis*, who there vpon the staire ended him: the said Sir *Thomas Erskine* being cast behinde the Duke and the Earle of *Marre* that ranne about the other way, by occasion of his meddling with the saide late earle



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Earle in the streete, after the hearing of his Maiesties crie. For vpon the hearing thereof, hee had clasped the Earle of *Gowrie* by the gorget, and casting him vnder his feete, and wanting a dagger to haue stricken him with, the said Earles men rid the Earle their maister out of his hands: whereby he was cast behinde the rest, as is said: and missing the company, and hearing the saide *Sir Iohn Ramsayes* voyce vpon the Turne-pecke head, ranne vp to the said Chamber, and cried vpon the saide *Sir Hew Hereis*, and another seruauent to follow him: where, meeting with the said maister *Alexander* in the Turne-pecke, he ended him there, as is said: the said maister *Alexander* crying for his last words, Alas I had not the weight of it. But no sooner could the saide *Sir Thomas*, *Sir Hew*, and another seruauent winne into the Chamber where his Maiestie was, but that the said Earle of *Gowrie*, before they could get the doore shut, followed them in at the backe, hauing cast him directly to come vp that priuie passage, as is before said: who at his first entrie, hauing a drawne sword in euery hand, & a Steele bonet on his head, accompanied with seauen of his seruants; euery one of them hauing in like maner a drawne sword, cried out with a great oath, that they should all die as traitors. All the which time his maiestie was still in the chamber, who seeing the Earle of *Gowrie* come in with his swords in his hands, sought for maister *Alexanders* sworde which had falne from him at his out-shutting at the doore, hauing no sort of weapons of his owne, as is saide: but then was shut backe by his owne seruants that were there, into the little studie, and the doore shut vpon him: who hauing put his maiestie in safety, re-encountred the saide Earle and his seruants, his maiesties seruants being onely in number foure, to wit, *Sir Hugh Hereis*, *Sir Iohn Ramsay*, and one *Wilson*, a seruauent of *James Erskins*, a brother of the said *Sir Thomas*, the said Earle hauing seauen of his owne seruauents with him: Yet it pleased God, after many strokes on all hands, to giue his maiesties seruants the victorie, the saide Earle of *Gowrie*

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being stricken dead with a stroke through the heart, which the said Sir *Ioh. Ramsay* gaue him, without once crying vpon God, and the rest of his seruants dung ouer the staires with many hurts, as in like maner the said Sir *Thomas Erskin*, Sir *Hugh Heris*, and Sir *Iohn Ramsay*, were all three very sore hurte and wounded.

But all the time of this fight, the Duke of *Lennox*, the Earle of *Mar*, and the rest of his Maiesties traine, were striking with great hammers at the viter doore, wherby his Maiestie passed vp to the chamber with the said maister *Alexander*, which also he had lockt in his by-comming with his maiestie to the chamber: but by reason of the strength of the saide double doore, the whole wall being likewise of boords, and yeelding with the strokes: it did bide them the space of halfe an houre and more, before they could get it broken and haue entresse: who hauing met with his Maiestie, found (beyond their expectation) his Maiestie deliuered from so imminent a perill, and the sayde late Earle the principall conspirator lying dead at his Maiesties feete. Immediately thereafter his Maiestie kneeling downe on his knees, in the midst of his owne seruants, and they all kneeling round about him: his maiestie out of his owne mouth thanked God of that miraculous deliuerance and victory, assuring himselfe, that God had preserved him from so dispaired a perill, for the persfiting of some greater worke behinde, to his glory, and for procuring, by him, the weale of his people, that God had committed to his charge. After this the tumult of the Towne hearing of the slaughter of the saide earle of *Gowrie* their Prouost, and not knowing the manner thereof, nor being on the counsel of his treasonable attempt, continued for the space of two or three houres thereafter, vntill his maiestie by oft speaking out to them at the windowes, and beckoning to them with his owne hand, pacifying them, causing the Bailifes and the rest of the honest men of the towne to be brought into the chamber, to whom hauing declared the whole forme of  
that



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that strange accident, hee committed the house and bodies of the saide traytors brethren, to their keeping, vntill his Maiesties further pleasure were knowne. His maiestie having before his parting out of that Towne, caused to search the saide Earle of *Gowries* pockets, in case any letters that might further the discouery of that conspiracie might be found therein. But nothing was found in them, but a little close parchment bagge, full of magicall characters, and words of inchantment, wherein it seemed that he had put his confidence, thinking himselfe neuer safe without them, and therefore euer caried them about with him: being also obserued, that while they were vpon him, his wound whereof he dyed, bled not, but incontinent after the taking of them away, the blood gushed out in great abundance, to the great adiniration of the beholders. An infamie which hath followed and spotted the race of this house, for many discents, as is notoriously knowne to the whole countrie. Thus the night was far spent, being neare eight houres at euening before his Maiestie could (for the great tumult that was in the towne) depart out of the same. But before his Maiestie had ridden foure miles out of the same towards *Falkland*, though the night was very darke and rainy: the whole way was clad with all sort of people, both horse and foote, meeting him with great ioy and acclamation. The frequencie and concourse of persons of all degrees to *Falkland* the rest of the weeke, and to *Edenburgh* the next, from all the quarters of the countrie, the testimony of the subiects harty affection and ioy for his Maiesties deliury, expressed euery where, by ringing of bells, bonefiers, shooting off gunnes of all sortes, both by sea and land, &c. with all other things ensuing thereuppon, I haue of sette purpose pretermited, as wel knowne to all men, and impertinent to this discourse: contenting my selfe with this plaine and simple narration: adding onely for explanation and confirmation thereof, the depositions of certaine persons, who were either actors, and eye-witnesses, or immediate

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hearers of those things that they declare and testifie : where-  
in if the Reader shall finde any thing differing from this nar-  
ration, either in substance or circumstance, he may vnderstand  
the same to be vttered by the deponer in his owne behoofe,  
for obtaining of his Maiesties Princely grace and fauour.

Apud Falkland. 9. August. 1600.

*In presence of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Treasurer, Lord Secre-  
tary, Lord Comptroller, Lord Advocate, the Lord Incheffray,  
and Sir George Home of Spot, Knights.*

**I** *Ames Weimais* of *Bogy*, of the age of 26. yeere or thereby,  
sworne and examined vppon the forme and maner of beha-  
uour of late *Iohn Earle of Gowrie*, the time of his being with  
him at *Strabran*, or if he had heard the said earle make any mo-  
tion of the treason intended against his royall Maiestie, de-  
pones, that he neither heard, nor saw, any appearance of any  
such intention in the said earle.

Demanded, if he was in any purpose with the said earle, a-  
gainst any matters of curiositie : depone, that at their being in  
*Strabran*, some of their company found an edder, which being  
killed, and knowledge thereof comming to the earle, the earle  
said to this deponer, *Bogy*, if the edder had not beene slaine, ye  
should haue scene a good sporte : for I should haue caused her  
stand still, and she should not haue pressed away, by pronoun-  
cing of an Hebrew word, which in Scottish is called *Holnesse*,  
but the Hebrew word the deponer remembers not of : and  
that the earle said, he had put the same in practise oft before.  
And this deponer enquiring of the earle, where he got the He-  
brew woord, the Earle aunswered, in a Cabbalist of the  
Iewes, and that it was by Tradition : and the deponer inqui-  
ring what a Cabbalist meant: the earle answered, it was some  
words which the Iewes had by Tradition, which words were  
spoken



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spoken by God to *Adam* in Paradise, and therefore were of greater effecacie and force than any woordes which were excogitate since by Prophets and Apostles. The deponer inquiring if there were no more requisite, but the word. The earle answered, that a firme faith in God was requisite and necessary: and that this was no matter of maruell amongst scholars, but that all these things were naturall. And that the earle shewed to this deponer, that he had spoken with a man in *Italie*, and first hearing, by report, that he was a Nigromancer, and thereafter being informed that he was a very learned man, and a deepe Theologue, he entred in further dealing with him against the curiositie of nature.

Depones further, that the saide earle reported to him, that hee beeing at musicke, hee fell in company with an other man, who staring in the earles face, spake to the rest of the company things of him, which hee could neuer attaine vnto, nor be worthy of: and therefore that the Earle reproached him, and desired him to forbear these speeches. And that hee met againe with the saide man in a like company, who did beginne with the same language which he had spoken before: and that the earle saide to him, my friend, in case ye will not hold your peace from speaking lies of mee, I will make you hold your peace by speaking truth of you, and said vnto him, within such a space he should be hanged for such a crime: and so it came to passe. This Deponer enquiring of the earle, who tolde him that, he answered merily, that he spake it by guesse, and it fell out so. And that the earle said further, that it was nothing to make an hearbe flesh which would dissolue in flies: and that likewise it was possible that the seed of man and woman, might be brought to perfection otherwise than by the matrix of the woman: and that this Deponer counselled the earle to beware with whom he did communicate such speeches: who answered that he would speake them to none, but to great schollers, and that he would not haue spoken them to this Deponer, if he

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he had not knowne him to be a fauourer of him, and a friend of his house, and would not reueale the same againe, seeing hee knew they would be euill interpreted amongst the common sorte.

*Sic subscribitur. I. Weimys of Bogie.*

*Apud Falkland. 20. August 1600.*

*In presence of the Lordes Chancellour,  
Treasurer, Aduocate: Sir George Home of  
Spot, Sir Robert Meluill, and Sir James  
Meluill Knights.*

**M**aister *William Rinde*, sworne and examined, and demanded, where he first did see the Characters which were found vpon my Lord: depones, that he hauing remained a space in *Venice*, at his returning to *Padua*, did finde in my Lordes pocket, the characters which were found vpon him at his death: and the deponer enquiring of my Lord, where he had gotten them, my Lord answered, that by chance hee had copied them himselfe: and that the Deponer knowes that the Characters in Latine are my Lords owne hand-writing, but hee knowes not if the Hebrew Characters were written by my Lord. Depones further, that when my Lord would change his clothes, the Deponer would take the characters out of my Lords pocket, and would say to my Lord, Wherefore serues these? And my Lord would answer, can ye not let them be? They do you no euill. And further, the Deponer declares, that sometimes my Lord would forget them, vntill he were out of his Chamber, and would turne backe, as he were in an anger, vntill hee had found them, and put them in his owne pocket: Depones further, that hee was sundry times purposed to haue burned the Characters, were it not that hee feared my Lords wrath and anger: seeing when the Deponer would purposely leaue them



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them sometimes out of my Lords pocket, my Lord would be in such an anger with the deponer, that for a certaine space hee would not speake with him, nor could not find his good countenance. And that (to this deponers opinion) my Lord would neuer be content to want the characters of himselfe from the first time that the deponer saw them in *Padua*, to the houre of my Lords death.

Being demanded for what cause my Lord kept the Characters so well, depones, that to his opinion, it was for no good, because he heard, that in those parts where my Lord was, they would giue sundry folkes breeues.

Depones further, that Maister *Patricke Galloway* lette this Deponer see the Characters, since that hee came to this Towne of *Falkland*, and that hee knowes them to be the very same characters which my Lord had. Depones also, that on monday the fourth of August, the Maister, *Andrew Henderson*, and the deponer remained in my Lords chamber til about ten houres at euen, and after a long conference betwixt the Lord and the maister, my Lord called for *Andrew Henderson*, and after some speeches with him, dismissed them.

Denies that hee knewe of the maisters or *Andrew Hendersons* riding to *Falkland*, and after *Andrewes* returne from *Falkland*, vpon the morrow, howbeit he did see him booted, yet he knew not that he was come from *Falkland*.

Depones that my Lord being at dinner when the Maister came in, the deponer heard my Lord say to the Maister; is the King in the Inshe? And with that he did rise, and said, let vs goe. But the deponer knowes not what the Maister said to my Lord.

Being demaunded if he did see any kind of armour or weapons, except swords, in the Kings companie, depones that he did see none.

It being demaunded how the deponer was satisfied with my Lords answer made to him, concerning the Kings com-

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ming to saint *Iohnstoun*, saying that hee knewe not how hee came : declares that he thought that my Lord had dissembled with him, and that he behooued to haue knowne it, seeing his brother was come with his Maiestie before that hee demanded of him, and that hee had conferred with my Lord priuily.

Depones, that he knew not that the maister was ridden to *Falkland*, vntil after his Maiesties comming to saint *Iohnstoun*, that *Andrew Ruthwen* told him, because the deponer inquired of *Andrew Ruthwen*, where the maister and hee had bin, and that *Andrew* answered, they had been in *Falkland*: and that the maister hauing spoken with the King, his maiesty came forward with them, and that this conference betwixt the deponer and *Andrew Ruthwen* was in the yeard when my Lord was there. And *Andrew Ruthwen* shewed to the deponer, that *Andrew Henderson* was directed by the maister, to shew my Lord, that his Maiestie was comming.

Depones also, that in his opinion, the maister could not haue drawne the King to my Lords house, without my Lordes knowledge : and that when hee heard the tumult, hee was resolu'd in his heart the maister had done his maiestie wrong, and that no true Christian can thinke otherwise, but that it was an high treason, attempted against his highnesse by the maister and the Lord.

Depones also, that to his opinion, the kings whole company was within a dozen of men.

*Sic subscribitur. M. W Rind,*

22. August. 1600.

Maister *William Rind* sworne and re-examined, if euer hee heard the Earle of *Gowrie* vtter his opinion, anent the ductie of a wise man, in the execution of an high enterprise : declares, that being out of the country, he had diuerse times heard him reason in that matter, and that hee was euer of that opinion, that hee was not a wise man, that hauing intended



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ded the execution of an high and dangerous purpose, communicate the same to any but to himselfe, because keeping it to himselfe, it could not be discovered nor disappointed : which the deponer declared before vnrequired to the Controller, and Maister *William Cowper* minister, at *Perth* : and hearing the depositions of *Andrew Hendersoun* read, and being enquired vpon his conscience, what hee thought of the fact that was committed against his Maiestie, declares, that vpon his saluation, that hee beleeueth *Andrew Henderfon* has declared the circumstances truly.

*Sic subscribitur. M. W. Rynd.*

*Apud Falkland. 20. August. 1600.*

*In presence of the Lordes Chancellour,  
Treasurer, Aduocate, Controller, and sir  
George Home of Spot, sir James Mel-  
uill, Knights.*

**A** *Andrew Hendersoun* sworne and examined, and demaunded, what purpose was betwixt him and the erle of *Gowrie*, vppon monday at night the fourth of this instant in the saide Earles chamber: depones, that the Earle inquired of him what he would be doing vpon the morne, and hee answered, that hee was to ride to *Ruthwen* : the earle saide to him, you must ride to *Falkland* with Maister *Alexander* my Brother, and when hee directs you backe, see that yee returne with all diligence, if he send a letter or any other aduertisement with you.

Depones, that the maister directed him to send for *Andrew Ruthwen* to be in readinesse, to ride with them the morrow at foure houres in the morning.

Declares, that they comming to *Falkland* about seauen  
D 2 houres

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houres in the morning, the Maister stayed in a lodging beside the Pallace, and directed the deponer, to see what the King was doing, and the deponer finding his Maiestie in the close comming forth, he passed backe, and told the maister, who immediately addrested himselfe to his Highnesse, and spake with his Maiestie a good space beneath the Equirie: and after his Maiestie was on horse-backe, the Maister commeth to the Deponer, and commaunds him to fetch their horses and bade him haste him, as hee loued my Lords Honour and his, and aduertise my Lord, that his Maiestie and hee would be there incontinent, and that his Maiestie would be quiet: and the Deponer inquiring of the maister if he should goe presently, he did bid him leape on and follow him, and not to goe away vntill he spake with the King: and the maister hauing spoken with the king, at a breach of the Park wall, he turned back and bade the Deponer ride away, and the Deponer making his returne in all possible haste to Saint *Iohnstonn*, he found my Lord in his Chamber, about tenne houres, who left the company hee was speaking with, and came to the Deponer, and asked, hath my brother sent a letter with you? The deponer answered, no: but they will be all here incontinent, and bade the deponer desire my Lord, to cause prepare the dinner. Immediately thereafter, my Lord took the deponer to the cabinet, and asked at him, how his maiestie took with the maister his brother? The deponer answered, very wel, and that his Maiestie laide his hand ouer the maisters shoulder. Thereafter my Lord enquired if there were many at the hunting with the King? the deponer answered, that he tooke no heed, but they who were accustomed to ride with his maiestie, and some Englishmen were there: and that my Lorde enquired what speciall men were with his Maiestie, and that the deponer answered, he did see none but my Lord Duke. And within an houre thereafter, when the deponer came in from his owne house, the Erle bade him put on his secret and plate-sleeues, for he had an hie-land  
man



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man to take, which the Deponer did incontinent : and about twelue houres, when the Deponer was going out to his owne house to dinner, the Steward came to him and told him, that *George Cragingelt* was not well, and was laine downe, desired him to tarry and take vp my Lords dinner : and about halfe an houre after twelue, my Lord commaunded him to take vp the first seruice. And when the deponer was commanded to take vp the second seruice, the maister and *William Blawe* came into the hall to my Lord.

The deponer reiembreth himselfe, that *Andrew Rushwen* came before the maister a certaine space, and spake with my Lord quietly at the Table, but heard not the particular purpose that was amongst them. And so soone as the maister came to the Hall, my Lord, and the whole company rose from the Table : and the deponer hearing the noyse of their forth-going, supposed they were going to make breakes for *Maconilday* : and the Deponer sent his boye for his gauntlet and Steele-bonnet : and seeing my Lorde passe to the Inshe, and not to the shoe gate, the Deponer did cast the gauntlet in the Pantry, and caused his boy to take his Steele bonnet to his owne house : and he followed my Lord to the Inshe, and returning backe with his maiestie to the lodging, being directed to get drinke. And the maister came to the deponer, and did bidde him cause maister *William Rinde* to send him vp the key of the Galery chamber, who passd vp and deliuered the key to the maister : and immediately my Lord followed vp, and did speake with the maister, and came downe againe, and directed maister *Thomas Cranstone* to the deponer, to come to his Lordship in his Maiesties Chamber. And that my Lord directed him to goe vp to the Gallery to his brother : and immediately my Lord followed vp, and commaunded the deponer to bide there with his brother, and to doe any thing that he bade him : The deponer enquired at the maister what haue ye to do sir? The maister answered, ye must goe in here,

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and tarry vntill I come backe, for I will take the key with mee. So he locked the deponer in the round within the chamber, and tooke the key with him. Shortly thereafter, the maister returned, and the Kings Maiestie with him to the said cabinet in the round: and the maister opening the doore, entred with the King into the said round: and at his very entrie couering his head, pulled out the deponers dagger, and held the same to his Maiesties breast, saying: Remember ye of my fathers murther? Yee shall now die for it: and minting to his Highnesse heart with the dagger, the deponer threw the same out of the maisters hand: and swore, that as God shall iudge his soule, if the maister had retained the dagger in his hand the space that a man may goe sixe steppes, he would haue stricken the King to the hilts with it: but wanting the dagger, and the Kings Maiestie giuing him a gentle answere, hee saide to the Kings Maiestie with abhominable oathes, that if hee would keepe silence, nothing should aile him, if hee would make such promise to his brother, as they would craue of him: and the Kings Maiestie inquiring what promise they would craue: he answered that he would bring his brother. So he goes forth, and lockes the doore of the round vpon his maiestie and the deponer: hauing first taken oath of the King that he should not crie, nor open the windowe.

And his Maiestie inquiring of the deponer what he was: He answered, a seruant of my Lords. And his Maiestie asking of the deponer, if my Lord would doe any euill to him? The deponer answered, as God shall iudge my soule, I shall die first. And the deponer pressing to haue opened the window, the maister entred, and said: Sir, there is no remedy, by God you must die: and hauing a loose garter in his hand, pressed to haue bound his Maiesties hands, and the deponer pulled the garter out of maister *Alexander* his hand. And then the maister did put one of his hands in his Maiesties mouth, to haue stayed him to speake, and held his other arme about his  
High-



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Highnesse necke : and that this deponer pulled the maisters hand from his Highnesse mouth, and opened the window: and then his Maiestie cried out thereat, whereupon his Highnesse servant came in at the gate, and this deponer did runne and open the doore of the Turnepecke head, whereat *John Ramsay* entred : the deponer stood in the chamber till he saw *I: Ramsay* giue the maister a stroke : and thereafter priuily conueyed himselfe downe the Turnepecke to his owne house : and the deponers wife enquiring of him, what the fray meant? The deponer answered, that the Kings Maiestie would haue beene twice sticked, had not he relieved him.

*Sic subscribitur Andrew Hendersoun  
with my hand.*

Further, the said *Andrew Hendersoun* Depones, that after his returning from *Falkland* on the fift of this instant, maister *John Montcrief* enquiring of him where he had beene? He answered, that he had beene beyond the bridge of *Erne*, and saies that he gaue that answere to maister *John*, because my Lord commanded him to let no man know that hee was to ride to *Falkland* : and that my Lords direction to him, was, to come backe with his brother maister *Alexanders* answere, and to leaue *Andrew Rushwen* to awaite vpon the maister.

*Sic subscribitur Andrew Hendersoun  
with my hand.*

Further, the saide *Andrew Hendersoun* depones, that when hee had taken the maisters hand out of the Kings maiesties mouth, and was opening the window, Maister *Alexander* saide to him, wilt thou not helpe? Woe betide thee, thou wilt make vs all die.

*Sic subscribitur Andrew Hendersoun  
with my hand.*

**F I N I S.**